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ABSTRACT

This essay examines and explicates the nature and pattern of epistemic transformations undergone by the United States academic discipline known as "speech communication." The system of examination and explication employed in the paper follows Michel Foucault's genealogical method of inquiry and, as such, offers a postmodern critical "history" of the relationship of "speech" to "communication" as matters of pedagogy and research in the 19th and 20th century academic praxis. The opening section of the paper problematizes the notion of historical inquiry, justifying postmodern rhetoric as a preferable approach to critique and epistemology. The second section problematizes the "history" of speech communication, particularly the supposition that the study and teaching of speech (as elocution) evolved into the modern, sophisticated social science of communication. The third section explores the dialectical tension between communication and speech. Specifically, the paper uses a close reading of Michael Burgoon's article, "On Divorcing Dame Speech," as a paradigm case of the rhetoric of evolution and disciplinary progress as applied to the speech communication discipline. The final section reconceptualizes the tension between "speech" (as "parole," or the discourse of lived body experience) and "communication" (as effective, i.e., communicative, speech, or practical discourse) in an attempt to formulate a network of tropological relations wherein the "body" of speech is subject to the arbitrary discipline of communication science. Forty-five references are attached. (Author/SG)

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Teaching on the Foam of Discourse: Genealogical Perspectives on the Emergence of Speech and Communication as Academic Disciplines

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ABSTRACT

This essay examines and explicates the nature and pattern of epistemic transformations undergone by the American (U.S.A.) academic discipline known as "speech communication." The system of examination and explication employed here follows Foucault's genealogical method of inquiry and, as such, offers a postmodern critical "history" of the relationship of "speech" to "communication" as matters of pedagogy and research in 19th and 20th Century academic praxis. The opening section problematizes the notion of historical inquiry, justifying postmodern rhetoric as a preferable approach to critique and epistemology. The second section problematizes the "history" of speech communication, particularly the supposition that the study and teaching of speech (as elocution) *evolved* into the modern, sophisticated social science of communication. The third section explores the dialectical tension between communication and speech. Specifically, a close reading is given to Michael Burgoon's article "On Divorcing Dame Speech" (1989), which is taken as a paradigm case of the rhetoric of evolution and disciplinary progress as applied to the speech communication discipline. The final section reconceptualizes the tension between "speech" (as *parole*, or the discourse of lived body experience) and "communication" (as effective—i.e, communicative—speech, or practical discourse) in an attempt to formulate a network of tropological relations wherein the "body" of speech is subject to the arbitrary discipline of communication science.

Teaching on the Foam of Discourse: Genealogical Perspectives on the Emergence of Speech and Communication as Academic Disciplines

A Preface to "History": Breaking the Code (From a Cosmopolitan Point of View)

What will follow is an attempt to both understand and explicate the epistemic transformations undergone by an American (U.S.A.) academic discipline whose pedagogy and research have been, at least for the last century or so, principally concerned with matters pertinent to rhetoric, speech, communication, and performance. For purposes of my study, I will refer to this field by the name suggested by its largest and oldest professional academic organization: speech communication. "But," I can hear my readers beginning to ask, "how can you even begin this task? How can you say that you have properly identified a field of study that has had more than one name, that is in fact presently identified by a number of names, and which will likely invent different names in the future?"

I will take this question as not merely a good question but a brilliant one. I will say in my preface to an actual response that this question is *well worth writing about*. This question about names, about identity, about past, present, and future, is quite clearly also about history, and it manages to locate the fragility of history not merely in its telling, but precisely in our concern for its accuracy. As I think about this question, I am immediately reminded of the many amnesia victims who have populated television's afternoon melodramas; characters who do not know their own names and whose only concept of meaning and whose only concept of history is that which is given in the present. These poor, lost souls are, of course, convenient, lazy contrivances. They are introduced into a story line to quickly stir things up, to reorient the motivations of other characters, perhaps to buy some time until a genuinely creative plot device can be found. They are usually taught a lesson, so to speak, about the importance of cultural knowledge, about knowing their pasts, their families, and all of the people who have loved and cared for them—in other words, all of what goes into knowing one's name. For, in the end, the story generally goes, the amnesia victim is cured.

So, how can I begin this study? I think I would like to become an amnesia victim. I would like to be able to speak to the readers of this study fully unmoved by the forces of history simply because of a neurological incapacity, bestowed upon me as a gift, which prevents me from comprehending it. With my mind,

my sensibility, otherwise intact, I would then address the instances of discourse which I inhabit and which serve to outline the temporary limits of my space, confronting me, embracing me and moving me along. I would prefer to respond to the anonymous texts and unavowed moments of 'truthful' encounter *affirmatively*; out of respect: critically, reflectively, truthfully, but with a sense of vulnerability to the experience as lived—or, as Foucault would have it, with a stammer.

I have arrived at the purposes of this study both dissipated and humored by the limitations of my own thought, having been swallowed up time and again by the waves of so-called "historical exigencies"—both within academia and without—uncompromisingly demanding time-consuming commitments: a stance, a speech, a document, an anxiety. Parties and regimes, examinations, inquisitors, stupefying, paranoid, browbeating—all the proud offspring of an implanted, overdetermined, modern moral imperative: a revolutionary attitude. Kantian duty, understood as the active force of reason (where Deleuze and Guattari [1977, p. 19] discover that there are *no empty spaces*), does not allow for idleness, for numbness, for confessions of stupidity, boredom, and forgetfulness, for an apprehension—always threatening to mutate into terror—borne out of a basic lack of confidence.

As Foucault (1977, p. 38) tells us, Kant—having navigated, to the Limit, the contours of all Western thought—was at least for a moment able to identify a critical opening for the energies of reason, only to return them to the cycle of anthropological matters. Panoptic and triumphant, he then establishes the tone for the type of stoic labor to which reasoned minds are always already committed:

> One cannot suppress a certain indignation when one sees men's actions on the great world-stage and finds, beside the wisdom that appears here and there among individuals, everything in the large woven together from folly, childish vanity, even from childish malice and destructiveness.

There is, in Kant's Idea of the world, a certain revolutionary impatience with the present; a general disregard for the circumstances permitting the moments of his times. As he candidly remarks (1963, p. 8): "If we are asked 'Do we now live in an *enlightened age*?' the answer is 'No,' but we do live in an *age of enlightenment*." Yet, through the haze of confidence and certainty in which he names the burden of reason, the categorical imperative which (as Deleuze and Guattari [1977, p. 75-76] note) "posits God as the a priori principle of the disjunctive syllogism," we can detect, if we listen closely, a faint note of doubt, a murmur of

indifference. "In the end," he confesses (1963, p. 12), "one does not know what to think of the human race, so conceited in its gifts."

In pursuing the thematic of this study, I not only share this indifference, I am buoyed by it. As Foucault (1984, p. 248; 1977, pp. 37-40) has pointed out, facile speech, the type which erupts from a body immersed in a revolutionary attitude, no longer "becomes" the practice of criticism. While it is true that history is grounded in a certain concern for the future (i.e., What will it be like?—and what will be said about our actions? How will our times be regarded?), it is not at all evident that our caring necessitates, or even justifies, our complaining. The question from which a critical perspective on history should, thus, begin does not concern the unacceptability of the present (viz. "folly, vanity, malice, destructiveness"), but instead leads us toward a full acceptance of the present. Its name is the binary analogue (see Lanigan 1988; 1989; Wilden 1987). It is the method of amnesiac *savoir*. In the formation of "his" knowledge, the amnesiac emerges, first, as a kind of "yes-man", learning to say "no" (i.e., to choose) only on the basis of "his" experience.

The tendency of the revolutionary attitude, where truth (in the name of Reason) precedes action, is to begin by accusing the present of all its shortcomings, of all that it is not. It is, as such, a negative attitude, a merciless nihilism wherein experience is always already contorted by anxiety, and observation is blurred by desire. Everything, it seems, is "out of place." The world needs some straightening out—and if not now, then soon. This, in short, has been the inclination of dialectical reason from Plato to Kant to Marx. It is a sober, sobering, and difficult logic to follow, necessitating a life of sacrifice, a life given to perfection, to the utopian "ought". Deleuze observes (1983, p. 196): "Dialectic in this sense is the authentically Christian ideology. . . . Even the atheism that it offers us is a clerical atheism. . ." The life of the dialectic thus is found in our sense of duty and in the quantitative weight, the gravity, of our commitments—a point which Deleuze carefully elaborates (p. 196):

> Dialectical positivity, the real in the dialectic, is the yes of the ass. The ass knows how to affirm because it take things upon itself, but it only takes on the products of the negative. For the demon, Zarathustra's ape, it is sufficient to jump on our shoulders; those who carry are always tempted to think that by carrying they affirm and that the positive is assessed by weight. The ass in a lion's skin—this is what Nietzsche calls the "man of the present."

The braying of the ass, both the sermon and complaint of modern 'man,' becomes, then, the reward for intellectual rigor. It is the embodiment, the manifest functioning, of 'his' struggle for consciousness: "I have labored hard, therefore I am entitled to speak"—or "I am in pain, so that is why I am speaking (about my pain)." Philosophy has known since Nietzsche, or—in Foucauldian terms (see 1977, pp. 37-38)—"it should undoubtedly know by now," that alienation is the only experiential consequence of this form of thought. It is philosophy with a hammer, *but the hammer is struck against us, it is struck against our very presence, it is struck against life itself.*

Just as important: this form of thought is rhetorically alienating. It is repetitive and tiresome. Grievance, protest, complaint—all expressions of resentment (*ressentiment*)—are not expressions of genuine feelings; instead, they are expressions of remembered feelings, in other words feelings that are saved, held onto, treasured: they are condensed and sustained, cathectically, in history to remind "us" (i.e., history's disciples) of our purpose, to keep us on the right path. And at a certain level they produce a certain sameness, an emptiness, a banality. They no longer express important, original messages; rather, they become warning signs, danger signals: sirens and flashing lights. Albeit necessary in their own way for the safety of our passage, they are in themselves uninteresting. They simply are not why we journey. They are not what we "go to see."

As I am now upon the subject matter of this study, I am aware that much of what I am inclined to say will not be particularly gratifying to those who have come to expect, even in intellectual discourse, "a common way of speaking."[1] My aspiration toward amnesia is, ultimately, a wish to be able to speak outside of discourse, and to write with only an outsider's knowledge of the "uncompleted" projects of modernism—which, Lyotard (1984, p. 72) reminds us, still belong to the Enlightenment—and, in particular, of the modern projects of communication as a social science. Operatively, an outsider's knowledge, my knowledge, is defined by the simplest of functions: a bemused curiosity, a floating perspective. It is not an assigned role; it is not an acknowledged stance.

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[1] I have chosen to borrow this phrase from Lyotard (1984, p. 71). In the context of his work, he is referring to "a reputable historian" who argues that "writers and thinkers of the 1960 and 1970 avant-gardes spread a reign of terror in the use of language, and that the conditions for a fruitful exchange must be restored by imposing on the intellectuals a common way of speaking, that of the historians."

In another sense, the choice to speak outside of discourse concerns the limits imposed by the very existence of a common way of speaking, and the fact that discourse has, through time, insisted on maintaining a realm of existence outside of itself, a realm where speech is problematized simply because it is uncommon or (as Lyotard [p. 81] suggests) "unpresentable." The choice to speak outside of discourse is not intended to represent a wish to be "uncommunicative", and it is assuredly not a wish to be irresponsible. To the contrary, the challenge of "presenting the unpresentable" resides in discovering that the systems of communication that we have long accepted as given, and which we have long suspected of determining the regime of the perceptible, are themselves expressive forms: "rituals originating in piety (as Nietzsche said) which prevent the unpresentable from being put forward" (Lyotard 1984, p. 81).

The case of "speech communication" is itself quite fascinating. It presents itself as an academic discipline, and it is appropriately immersed in professional, technical, artistic, and scientific activities. Unlike most other contemporary academic disciplines, however, it has been unable—even within the relatively brief span of time in which it has been represented in the taxonomy of the modern university—to decide upon a consistent narrative framework for the presentation of its work. And this is not even to suggest that it ought. There's no inherent reason that it should mimic the discursive patterns of other academic disciplines, patterns in which the transcendent flow of their (dialectical) historical transformation and the rhetorical poles of their sociopolitical objectives are deceptively presented, both in pedagogy and research, as consensual and conversant. And, unlike most other disciplines, it has nagging doubts about its status as an academic discipline.

On this basis, a study of "speech communication" is not so much about the monuments marking the territory of a particular academic field as it is about the system of communication that has come to define the presentable, the "speakable"—the speech which reveals a permissible presence—within academia itself. As such, "speech communication" is nothing more than a rhetorical figure suspended within the discourse of academic history, offering the possibility of a tropic description of the system of power/knowledge (in the broad field of intellectual discourse) at the point where (individual) speech—*both* presentable *and* unpresentable—intersected and became discursively bonded to (the laws of)

communication, i.e., the context determining whether the forms of speech chosen are taken as *either* acceptable *or* unacceptable.

As I write, and as I my thinking moves from the innocent exorbitance of imagination to the frailty of its incarnation, I do not wish to be reminded of my limits. I would prefer to name them on my own. And, unlike the soap opera amnesiac, I do not wish to be cured.

—"but wait." Leaning forward, I again perceive what can only be taken as a doubt, framed as a question, forming on the lips of a worried reader, this one somewhat more restive than the first. "You have not as yet stated the purpose for the study you are about to undertake. What are its practical implications? How will it affect the status of knowledge in the field out of which you are writing? Can you at least isolate an application for the results of this research?—and could you possibly present it in such a way that, upon reading it, we might be gratified with a little sense?"

"Do not ask who I am and do not ask me to remain the same . . ." This is the well-known demand which Foucault (1972, p. 17) makes of his audience so that he might experience the simultaneous pleasures of lending speech to the traces of an elusive thought, and of disappearing into the labyrinths of his writing. There must come a point where this is no longer a demand, where this is instead understood as the condition for *responsible theoretical* writing; in other words, for writing—although composed in the recognizable idioms of its discursive time and place—whose purpose is nevertheless to critique the very discursive conditions which gave birth to it, named it, and now tolerate its continued existence. It captures the first anti-Oedipal impulse: biting the flesh that feeds it. And it alerts us to the fact that we are born into the fold of discourse leading a dual existence[1]—and not just in terms of modernity's clever ruse of "self and other." But this expression, this art, this poetic arc can only live a tortured existence if it is to reside in constant fear of its condemnation, of being labelled the spoiled, ungrateful child. And it cannot be content to remain imprisoned in the given, historical body of a child all of its life, especially at the point where it becomes conscious of the fact that it is, now, sufficiently mature to speak its own mind.

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[1]A very compelling explication of the inherent duality of existence within the folds of discourse can be found in Foucault (1986).

Choked and apprehensive, the voice of criticism presents its reply: "Why do you ask me to prepare a manifesto (in other words, to make your decisions for you), and why must you always pretend that I speak from a recognizable platform? I do not have an agenda, and I do not speak because I want something from you. Moreover, I will have nothing to say if I must speak in the filial register of reactive gratitude and guilt, of 'thank you/I'm sorry'—the two monumental poles of Western culture."

"Speech Communication" and the Problematic of its History

The emergence and development of speech communication as a modern academic discipline, the story generally goes, began in antiquity (through the dialectic and rhetoric of Plato and Aristotle, we surmise), was sustained in early Roman civilization (in the classical, 'statesmanly' philosophies of Cicero and Quintilian), "disappeared" during the middle ages (existing only in cloistered and obscure metaphysical explorations), reappeared triumphantly during the Enlightenment, became popularized during the elocutionary movement, and, finally, evolved into an advanced, sophisticated social science during the Twentieth Century. It is in fact a hero's tale, a story of maturation and perfection, of mistakes and corrections, of struggle and redemption. It is a story of *inspiration*, an account of the always-emanating human voice: a record of the twin poles of responsibility and liberation as they have revealed themselves, in various forms and in various stages, during the course of civilization.

Other versions of this story are, variously, less positive and less optimistic—and seem to become more and more strident as they assume greater complexity and ideological commitment. These versions, however, do not take issue with the general idea of speech communication as undergoing a continual process of maturation, as a subject of progress and evolution, and all are in general agreement that there is still a work to be done. Where they diverge is precisely the point at which they attempt to define the type of work which remains to be done: which principles to actualize, which mistakes to correct, which paths to follow. One version holds that the discipline must continue to expand its research base and pedagogical discourse in the social sciences, and that it should seek a proper balance between fulfilling this important objective and carrying out its traditional pedagogical mission, viz., the teaching of speech skills (interpersonal and public) to undergraduate students.

Another version, although not entirely or necessarily different, holds that the steady increase in knowledge regarding all aspects of communication has had both positive and negative effects on the social world. As such, if communication is to be studied and taught, it should be approached from a perspective that will be most beneficial *for society*. Depending upon the attitude and moment of its telling, this perspective surfaces as a call for communication studies to become more humane, more inclusive, more sensitive, more generous—in other words, the kind of knowledge that should matter is knowledge that increases the range of human happiness and builds a better world.

Still other versions (again, not entirely or necessarily different) dwell on the problems within the field and within academia. Some see the resource battles taking place within the academic institution as necessitating a certain organizational self-consciousness, a necessary vanity to protect the future of the discipline. In this formulation, 'future' is tied to 'reputation'—both existing as very real things—and in this formulation both are currently under siege. The future of communication studies is jeopardized, it is said, if the discipline invests its time and resources in what appear to be nonacademic pursuits (again, speech skills), matters that are no longer intellectually or dialectically interesting, and for which there no longer seems to be particularly strong sentiment (that is, except as preprofessional, finishing school instruction). As well, the future of communication studies is at risk, it may be said, if it does not maintain a cohesive and coherent identity, thus summoning the question: what are 'we'?—Speech? Communication? Rhetoric? Information science? Broadcasting? Disciplinary diversity, in this view, becomes problematic inasmuch as it may be taken as an emblem of disorder: 'we' are that plural entity which has failed to choose (an obvious sign of weakness).

Finally, there are significant political dimensions both in our attitudes toward history and in the name given to the work that is to be done in speech communication. The content and form of studies in speech communication are the subject of significant power struggles between the members of the intellectual left and right. These struggles bespeak a factional discourse and, in a sense, a factitious narrative. On one side are the realists, the logical empiricists, the social scientists who have thus far found no express value in deconstructing or disengaging the institutions from which and for which discourse always seems to emerge. On the other side are Marxists, feminists, existentialists who have lost hope for the sal-

vation of liberal values by way of communication studies, and for whom the future of discourse resides in the magic of dreams and the perfection of utopian vision.

Yet, what is fascinating, and most compelling, is the extent to which each of these histories of the academic field of human speech and communication is true. Each of these perspectives on the development and emergence of speech communication, taken as studies of performance, influence, meaning, and composition, is necessarily grounded in a deep and substantial fiction. Except for the fact that 'we' in the field of speech communication clearly exist as a thriving and dynamic institutional entity, and that in having arrived at 'this' point—at 'this' *place*—we have clearly been someplace else, there is no 'past' that distinctly belongs to us. There is no past that is separate from the *mythos* that constitutes all other histories, at least in the sense that history—as far as we have come to know it— is *'mosaic'*: it has the quality and the tension of a journey, it portends a commanding revelation, and it is constituted by many small pieces held together by a creative design (so, in this sense, speech communication is not unique; we all have checkered pasts!).

The truth that is told in the telling of speech communication's former times (whether as epic, tragedy, comedy, or confession) is the 'knowledge' that is secreted in all such tellings. It is experience speaking. The one material condition of history, it was once held, is that it stood as the fundamental spoil of victory—the knowledge of conquest: the victor speaks, the vanquished is spoken. Yet, through our passage into modernity, the classical emblems of power—as well as the rule for its dispersion and economy—were transformed. Power (as with capital), we now know, has been redistributed—or, more specifically, *disseminated* and *deployed*—and the capacity for authentic expression, for meaning, resides 'within' the individual human actor. So, what is the history of speech communication? It would, of course, depend on who is speaking (and who is listening).

Well beyond this modern discovery of history as an individual prerogative, however, there lurks another important question: can there be a *general* history of a field of discourse? Is there a designation, as for example in the case of speech communication, where the multiplicity of speaking, knowing perspectives converge—where, apart from ideology, the histories that are proposed by the realists, the Marxists, the humanists, the feminists, the social scientists reveal a general formation of discourse?

This is exactly the question that was addressed by Foucault (1972) in the detailed explication he lays out for his archæological method of inquiry. Foucault opposes the concept of an 'archæology of knowledge (savoir)' to the customary disciplinary approach implied by "the history of ideas" (1972, p. 135-140). In a strict sense, this questioning of orientations toward history and discourse suggests the essential difference between the notions of economy and ecology. In our ordinary usage, we tend to think of economy as the study of the pattern, control, and flow of capital, and ecology as the study of the relationship between an organism and its environment. In practice, it appears very much the case that these terms are contradictory: as nations have grown ever more environmentally conscious, it has become commonly understood that the earth's ecological problems are a significant consequence of global economic practices. Yet, on closer inspection, we can observe that the difference between these terms resides not at the level of public behavior and common understanding, but resides instead at the level of the '-logy' and the '-nomy,' in other words, between *logos* (speaking) and *nomos* (naming). The 'eco' for both is the same: it designates the *oikos,* the 'house' or dwelling of the living organism; it is the environment with which the organism interacts. Or, in the sense proper to semiotic phenomenology, it is the space of human existence. And, in this sense, the 'contradiction' between economy and ecology is not *necessary*—thus raising the issue: how is possible that the name that is given to the system which is the space of human existence has come to violate the speech which designates the person's life within his or her space? What is this *power* of the name?

So, instead of continuing the tiresome—and infinite—quest for the true history of a discursive field, the fully and finally disclosed unchanging mosaic pattern, we approach the problematic of history and discursive transformation asking a different set of questions. Broadly, we seek to discover what *statement* is made by the "set of relations that unite, at a given period, the discursive practices that give rise to epistemological figures, sciences, and possibly formalized systems" (Foucault 1972, p. 191). In the case of the present inquiry, the question becomes: what is the statement that is made by speech communication?

Within the framework of this question, we find not a history of events, not a dialectical proposition, not a *Zeitgeist* (i.e., cultural attitude, or historical psychology), not a literal pronouncement, utterance, or

intellectual coinage. Within the framework of this question, we are set to the task of examining the *function* of speech communication. We will examine its function within the exclusive universe of academia, its taxonomy and grammar, as a corporate body. According to Dreyfus and Rabinow (1982, pp. 48-49), the examination of statements, in Foucault's work, entails a close study of the conditions operative within a given discursive community for a speaker *to be taken seriously*. Quite simply, the idea is that *some* statements, or speech acts, within the time of their enunciation are attended to, held in esteem, understood—in short, are given an aspect of power and privilege— and some are not. Appropriately, Foucault's approach to the 'history' of statements is tropic; it is a creative attempt, by way of the discourse of semiotic phenomenology, to deviate from the understood truth of historical knowledge. "He [Foucault] is bracketing precisely the claim of serious speech acts to *serious* meaningfulness, to being what Kuhn called 'penetrating and deep'" (Dreyfus and Rabinow 1982, p. 49).

The concept of speech communication as statement, thus, functions within the discursive region of academia in a manner quite different than its ordinary history would purport. As we begin to approach this concept, we can no longer blithely assume that something "important" has been achieved simply because the field of speech communication has been "blessed" with *both* a "history" and an existence. Merely because it has been given a name, a task, and a place within the economy of discourse, a field of knowledge does not become privileged or special. There simply is no significative road which was travelled from 'there' to 'here' to deliver a discipline of performance, influence, meaning, and composition into the twenty-first century. Instead, there is only that which exists—a corporate unity, a situation, and then the confrontational 'issues' which nag and problematize it, continually inciting the cry for the authority of traditional history as defense. The existent state of speech communication as an American (U.S.A.) academic discipline, moreover, has become a matter of burning interest—in its own way, a much more compelling story than any 'history' could provide.

It has become most evident that there is, in the United States, a telling restlessness among academicians in the field of speech communication with regard to almost all aspects of the field's public existence. These academicians, it seems, are deeply concerned about being taken seriously as academicians. In the past few years, several regional organizations which promote teaching and scholarship in the

field of speech communication, along with their attendant quarterly journals, have changed their names, removing the word "speech" from their titles. What this reflects is the emergence of a general consensus that there is something problematic in an academic study of communication that is *speech* communication; that there is a substantial liability in maintaining speech as a condition of communication studies.

The 'speech' in speech communication has been treated as a sort of scar: a disturbing reminder of an 'unpleasant' accident. It is a reminder of the mechanistic and fetishistic 'doctrine' of the 19th Century elocutionary movement. It is a reminder that, even after the establishment of speech as a "modern" academic discipline at the turn of the 20th Century, it was still principally concerned with matters relevant to effective "speech-making" (oratory, debate, voice training) and dramatic performance. These reminders are especially painful given that it has long been widely acknowledged that the study of communication has displayed significant intellectual growth over the last century: certainly the discipline's body of theory and research has gone well beyond the "how-to" of speech and performance, and such progress would seem substantially negated by the continued emphasis of that which 'speech' (historically) signifies.

Yet the "embarrassment" of speech communication is more than a matter of the surpassed and primitive "old" versus the timely and sophisticated "new." More to the point, the widely acknowledged growth of the field, as reflected in its transformation and evolution, should, it seems, be taken as a matter of pride. Yet, the desire within the field for a change in identity—for a new mantle, a new disguise—however, has no obvious, direct connection to any particular theoretical dispute raging within the discipline. It is instead a matter of academic 'respectability,' of being a discipline viewed as "properly academic"—or, in other words, being viewed *as an academic discipline*. Again, there is something about 'speech' which detracts from a 'proper' image of academic respectability, and it is worth noting that this point of view was clearly articulated by James A. Winans quite early on in the evolution of speech communication. He wrote (1923) that "(1) There is at least grave doubt whether or not our present usage of *speech* is correct... (2) it seems clear that the word is dangerously ambiguous, and (3) our names do actually serve to stress one part of our work and to belittle other parts."

Yet, in addition to identifying the problem with 'speech' as "nothing new," this passage from Winans also serves to identify the matter of academic nomenclature as one of *public communication*.

Particularly in his concern that "our names... serve to stress..." he is well aware of the political function performed by choosing 'one word over another' to identify the set of practices that constitute an ordered discipline—a professional organization contending, emulously, for space within the structured framework of an academic institution.[1] Very much in keeping with Lanigan's (1988) description of "conventionality," this has become an issue of "professional mass communication." Or seen in a somewhat different light, it is a 'body' (the organization) engaged in 'public speaking'—an ironic 'speech' speaking—experiencing all of the tensions, emotions, neuroses, and paranoia ordinarily experienced by a body when speaking before a mass audience. Shameful ecstasy: the body is embarrassed and confused because it is startled into consciousness and it is suddenly aware of itself for the "first time"; it is bashfully aware of its fullness, its otherness, its 'sexuality.' The anxiety of mass communication, or that which makes the experience of mass communication properly a function of anxiety, of neurosis, derives from the body's concern for ascendancy, its desire for conformity and recognition.[2] In a sense, its preoccupation with identity—and its paranoia about loss of control, about the inundating force of otherness and difference—is a form of class-consciousness, a fetishism with the symbols of status. The body fears discipline (that is, in the form of punishment and ridicule); it desires the privileged anonymity of belongingness and regularity. The 'audience' for this special case of speech speaking is very much a party to this discourse of power and legitimation, and as with all cases of public speaking, it will only confer recognition on the speaker conditionally, as an *initiation* into its hierarchy—but not abandoning its position of mastery (see Lanigan, pp. 257-259; see also Perelman & Olbrechts-Tyteca 1971, pp. 99-100). The speaker sits down at the con-

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[1] Winans' uneasiness with "speech" led him to propose (1923, p. 230) that "we add *rhetoric* to our names." As with the desires reflected in the present changes in nomenclature, Winans' concern was for academic respectability ("...*rhetoric* is a word with a long and, on the whole, an honorable history" [p. 230].). Quoting directly from a letter (about "speech")he received from a distinguished language scholar, Dr. Paul Shorey, Winans writes (p. 228): "'My first impression was that the title "Professor of Speech" or "Department of Speech" was both ambiguous and a little quaint. And I think I intended quotation marks in my voice as I used it.' ...Dr. Shorey thinks, in brief, that we can 'get away with' *speech*... But he does not know, of course, that it is precisely the public, our public, we were trying to impress favorably when we changed our names."

[2] From this standpoint it makes no real difference if the 'body' is an institutional entity (such as an academic discipline), a corporation selling a service or product, a candidate for public office, or a political group seeking legitimation. All 'bodies' view the process of mass communication as a vehicle of order and acceptance. All seek the *confidence* of the group. All seek initiation into the group.

clusion of the speech, the tensions ease up a bit, but now another flow of doubt takes over: How did I do? Did they accept me? However, the audience is not to be blamed for its privilege of fickleness and its position of 'superiority.' Instead, the body's desire for recognition, to be accepted into an ordered group, is the primary source of its own trauma: it has invented its role—as it has likewise invented the juridical attributes of its audience, it has invented its own forms of punishment and ridicule, and it has invented its own marginality.

As I reflect upon the 'speech speaking,' the expressive body, in speech communication's desire to separate itself from its public liabilities, its source of ridicule, I am reminded of a passage from Bergson (1956, p. 93):

> "Why do we laugh at the public speaker just at the most pathetic moment of his speech?... It lies in the fact that our attention is suddenly recalled from the soul to the body... Now, we have a speaker whose most eloquent sentences are cut short by the twinges of a bad tooth; now one of the characters who never begins to speak without stopping in the middle to complain of his shoes being too small or his belt too tight, etc. *A person embarrassed by his body* is the image suggested to us in all these examples. I almost think that this too is what sometimes makes bashfulness somewhat ridiculous. A bashful man rather gives the impression of a person embarrassed by his body, looking round for some convenient cloakroom in which to deposit it."

What is even more interesting is the extent to which the 'bashful man' succeeds in finding convenient repositories to deposit, to dispose of, his 'embarrassing body.' As a consequence, the good man (included body) emerges, while all that is undesirable (excluded body) is suppressed. The body is separated from its odors, from its wastes, from its mistakes, from its enemies, from its glaring immediate presence and its nakedness. By renaming itself and casting itself into the light of contemporary consciousness, the body is separated from its history.

But this is not to suggest that this dispersion of the body—into garments, into closets, behind curtains (and then everywhere else, 'visible')—describes a set of practices problematic in themselves. Desire for outgoing, gregarious acceptance (itself, a regularity and anonymity) is no less absurd than a desire for an embarrassed and bashful privacy, a 'burrowing' secrecy, and both are very much a part of existence as 'ek-sistence.' The question concerns, then, not the desire for privacy, or the maintenance of crisis hetero-

topias, but the matter of laughter: *what is the irony, i.e., what is so ridiculous, in not wanting to appear ridiculous?*

It would be a rather simple matter to classify the 'case of speech communication' as one of modern evolution and transformation. In such a conception, we would view the 'academic discipline' as a kind of evolving species, struggling against the probability of extinction in an unaccepting, often hostile environment. Such a 'struggle,' it is easily pointed out, is intensely political: a dramatic confrontation of classes and forces in an ongoing quest for power, control, and domination. The hierarchical and arborescent structure of academia lends further credence to this diagnosis. Claire Parnet (Deleuze and Parnet 1987, pp. 25-26) put it quite well: "Now there is no doubt that trees are planted in our heads: the tree of life, the tree of knowledge, etc. The whole world demands roots. Power is always arborescent. There are few disciplines which do not go through schemas of arborescence... and yet nothing goes through there..." She continues (p. 26):

> Schools are of the arborescent type. And a school is already terrible: there is always a pope, manifestos, representatives... tribunals, excommunications, impudent political volte-faces, etc. The worst thing about schools is not merely the sterilization of disciples (they have richly deserved it), it is rather the crushing, the suffocation of all that happened before or at the same time...

As such, speech communication has merely succumbed to the dialectics of history, and has sensed its 'difference' from other academic disciplines as opposition rather than affirmation—a logos of the enslaved: *ressentiment* (see Deleuze 1983, p. 69; and Descombes 1980, pp. 152-167).

From this point of view, speech communication is entailed in much the same sort of class/power 'game' as it was earlier in this Century (see Woolbert 1923) when concern was expressed that the speech discipline needed to more strictly adhere to the (Germanic) models of 'science' and scholarship pervasive in the academy at that time. A 'continuity' (see Foucault 1972, p. 25) is, now, identified in the practices of other, competing, academic disciplines/departments, and the continuity is taken as a statement of regularity and a reflection of a general will.[1]

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[1]This phenomenon has been discussed by Spanos (1989) and Zavarzadeh and Morton (1986-87) as one occuring throughout the humanities disciplines. The clamor over Alan Bloom's book—and its apparent conformity to a reactionary desire (or, more specifically, to an ideological flow and an actual political movement) to exercise control over the curriculum of higher education in order to preserve the canon of Western Civilization—has become a

Yet, while there is more than a grain of truth in all of this, it also seems very much the case that there is a certain apprehension present in the participation of speech communication in the games of status and power which have come to define academia, and this apprehension is not sufficiently addressed in this very tempting, but at the same time very limited, political account. In its pretensions toward becoming-academic, it[1] has displayed all of the apprehensions of the debutante: nervous, flirtatious, properly 'instructed,' and totally sexualized. But the series of transformations marking speech communication's evolution and maturation is less a phenomenon of 'coming out,' of entrance and debut, than it is a phenomenon of exit and escape. (It must not be forgotten, after all, that speech communication is already a part of academia.) Perhaps in its anonymity it hopes to find a certain freedom, a liberation—a momentary idleness—that is occasionally found in the dicey and decentered experiences of unemployment, divorce, and the death of Others. But it seeks to arrive at this moment, for whatever its worth, through a process of 'violence' and self-loathing that is not clearly present in the transformation of other disciplines. Speech communication seeks its academic identity not in any sense of unity or doctrine but in an expression of hostility: a purging and a mutilation.

Speech communication, indeed, suffers from a kind of anorexia. It cannot avoid being the body for others which it has historically come to be. Despite its graduate programs, its academic research, its pursuit of theory, it remains the discipline which, uncritically, teaches speaking as speech-making, as a set of skills and a technology of human interaction—basically, what Alan Fischler (1989) described in his infamous editorial. If it is to be a body for itself in any creative and meaningful way, it must find a way to subdue its "spoken-for," sexualized 'body.' Much like the anorexic woman who loathes what she perceives as her excess—or that which would code or classify her as a voluptuous, sexual woman, speech communication loathes that which might code it as "other" than properly academic, and it knows full well that the thou-

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genuine issue for the academic left. A fuller discussion can be found in Frank Lentricchia's *Criticism and Social Change* (1983).

[1] In referring to the entity of speech communication as an 'it,' I am referring to its 'corporate structure within the university; having a certain form, function, and inertia, it—as with all corporate groups—also has a certain 'personality.'

sands of students each year who undergo experiences of embarrassment in speech communication courses will retain (and perpetuate) an impression of the discipline as one of modern elocutionary training.

But, what is purged in this case? Is it just a set of practices, i.e., the teaching of speech as a technology (which will likely be conducted anyway, but just not in the clear light of day)? As with the anorexic, it seems it is the surface of discourse itself that is being purged. The anorexic is obsessed with the knowledge that her body is a medium of overwhelming and, at points, frightening sexual discourse, so she attempts to alter the surface of the discourse (by not eating; shrinking her flesh) in such a way as to subdue its sexual potentialities; nevertheless, her body is still fully sexualized: she gains a certain control over her image, an ambiguous control, an illusion of power, but ultimately it is still not she who is calling the shots. In the case of the discipline whose 'labor' it has historically been to transform the expressive body, the distinctly human, into an efficient and organized instrument of social discourse, it is, again, the body *image* which is transfigured and displaced. Speech communication, it may well be argued, is willingly sacrificing that which originally brought it into the fold of the modern university, i.e., the discourse of the body, in a self-destructive moment of failed ecstasy—a fetishistic desire for regularity and sameness.

Disciplinary Progress in the Name of Communication: On Humping and Shucking the Body of Speech

It is from within this very context—not just that of power and desire, but that of sexuality, gender, and the flesh—that the disciplinary transformation of speech communication as a *speech act*—as a statement—within the general framework of academia begins to come into full view. And, from within this context, new perspective can be gained for examining representative commentary—that is, utterances that are strategically positioned (as advocacy, as representation) within the 'debate' about the academic future of 'the discipline'—offered, *as* a 'rational discourse,' in defense of certain active (but, as yet, inarticulate and unconscious) desires.

Perhaps the most revealing instance of this sort of commentary offered thus far can be found in a recent, highly polemical article written by Michael Burgoon (1989). Burgoon, a leading scholar in the field of speech communication for over a decade, makes an argument boldly identifying, as *the* principal disci-

plinary problematic, the continued presence of "speech" courses in "communication" departments. Burgoon's position, although written with the voice of an iconoclast, of someone attempting to say something outrageous and, consequently, vex his traditionalist audience, is very much typical of the progressive, evolutionary model of speech communication's 'history'. In stating that the "non-disciplinary, ascholarly, entity called Speech" should be abandoned in favor of the "research knowledge being generated by scholars in communication" (p. 303), he is, quite clearly, speaking from within the discourse of modern (and, for that matter, classical) rationality.

Moreover, his central argument, presented as a sort of manifesto, consists largely of claims about the academic status of the field that have been made time and again throughout this century.[1] Concerns about the content and form of instruction, the quantity and quality of research efforts, and the proper connection of research to instruction, bespeak issues which have been, and are now, fully exhausted, emptied. His commentary—which nevertheless has been taken as a dismaying, embarrassing, anti-social "elitism" (see Wambach 1990)—on the burden of speech instruction to disciplinary (i.e., communication) integrity, on the nonacademic orientation of "skills"/performance courses, on the folly and self-destruction of "attempting to be all things to all people," is not particularly innovative: it continues to raise its questions and form its interpretations from the depths of traditional history, from ancient colonial patterns and tendencies, of epic heroes, redemptive conquests, miracles and perfection, which have fueled the disciplinary impetus since the birth of knowledge.

However, all of this is not meant to imply that there is *not* something jarring, something exorbitant, transgressive—and significant—in Burgoon's writing. And, it is important to note, I do not mean to imply that the significant, transgressive quality of Burgoon's writing would, thus, somehow fall *outside* of his 'message,' in other words, outside the 'content' of what he writes. In fact, it is in the *context* that he

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[1]Each organizational name change (such as the change from the National Association of the Academic Teachers of Public Speaking to the National Association of Teachers of Speech to the Speech Association of America) indexes at least some of the critical moments—tremors, in a sense—in the topological development of the field. The relative academic acceptability and respectability of the generally undefined Nineteenth Century discursive field of rhetoric and elocution, as well as the "becoming-discipline" of Speech, have been principal topics for focussed discussion and debate for a very long time (see Smith 1954; Gray 1954; and Rarig & Greaves 1954). For a representative sampling of criticisms and commentaries regarding matters of research, writing, and disciplinary taxonomy, see Winans (1923); Hunt (1917); and Woolbert (1923); for a brief 'historical' survey of the hegemonic struggles of the field , see Macke (1991).

chooses for presenting what is in effect not "his" message, but what is in effect a positivity revealing an archive of discourse (see Foucault 1972, pp. 126-131) "about communication", that an original message—an enunciation—begins to take shape.

There are two extraordinary, clearly transgressive features that are in evidence in Burgoon's characterization of the speech communication discipline. The first is his choice to assign a gender ("dame speech") to what is nothin more than a category of discourse, an eidetic entity. The second is his choice to explicitly employ the allegory of marital dissolution ("divorcing dame speech")—or, more specifically, of a husband (communication) removing the "disciplinary shackles" of a nagging, burdensome wife—to enact a visualization of his manifesto.

There is, in this singular drama of disciplinary progress and ascendency—especially given the makeup of Burgoon's audience: sensitive, academic, humanistic—a genuinely deviant, antiheroic (perhaps mischievous, perhaps just irritating) quality to his writing. In a very clear sense, it is an affront to the rhetoric (that is, the 'ethical rhetoric' [see Lanigan 1988, pp, 15-17]) of late-modern humanism. It is, after all, the egocentric, narcissistic husband—not the loving, caring one—that we have come to identify with the misogamist practice which Tom Wolfe (1976) has so keenly named "wife-shucking". More to the point, Burgoon's designation of the masculine gender to productive, scholarly, 'communication' and the feminine gender to non-disciplinary, ascholarly 'speech' implies more than the mere likelihood of misogyny. We are presented with the image of the heroic masculine soldier/scholar, at war with the forces of ignorance, shouldering—or as novelist Tim O'Brien (1986) has suggested, "humping"[1]—the burdens shrugged by cowards, "humping" the burdens which wartime necessitates: humping his rifle, his messkit, canteen, compass, maps, ammunition, bible—and humping yet another awful, unfair burden, a ball and chain, 'this' old bag, Dame Speech. Given the context of choice, and given the type of attention that his article has generated, it is quite fair to say that Burgoon's misogynist writing is both intended and, for its purposes, sincere. The question which emerges at this point, though, has very little to do with misogyny

[1]O'Brien brilliantly exploits this metaphor in a short story ("The Things They Carried") he wrote out of his experience as a footsoldier in the Viet Nam war.

as a (sufficient) rupture of the discourse of humanist ethics, but probes Burgoon's deviance from another angle. It asks: what *else* is it?

We can begin by taking note of a particular urgency in Burgoon's disposition of the familiar archive. And, I am not simply referring to such formalistic matters as brevity, bluntness (i.e. his "telegraphic" style wherein an "S.O.S." is vaguely disguised as an academic commentary) or even sarcasm. Let us, instead, address the allegory as a matter of unfinished business, and consider the conditions for the imminent conjugal split, as enunciated, to be legitimate. And, on this basis, we are not imagining the melodrama, clearly recognizable in our time, in which a spoiled and self-absorbed man nonchalantly abandons his wife and marital vow in pursuit of some element of naked desire: power, capital, or libidinal pleasure. To the contrary, we are witnessing a case in which an individual (and let us assume, just for the moment, that the assignment of gender is a rather arbitrary matter) has discovered that her or his spouse has become an unwieldy burden on her or his quality of life.

And let us continue to maintain that the conditions for the divorce are as stated: a gross lack of diligence, commitment, and output. What kind of divorce would this be?—and what kind of marriage would this have been? I am thinking of a tragic, loveless marriage, a union sustained far too long and only for the sake of appearances. A union wherein one of the parties "awakens" long (or perhaps just moments) before the other, discovers her or his situation—which is immediately taken as enslavement (or, properly, as *embarrassment*), and, reactively, forms a contempt for both the other and the vow which defines and perpetuates the relationship. I am reminded, if only for a moment's pause, of the adolescent angst, the negativity—impatience and insecurity, hostility and resentment—evoked in Bob Dylan's "Maggie's Farm" (1965):

> I ain't gonna work on Maggie's Farm no more.
> No, I ain't gonna work on Maggie's Farm no more.
> Well, I wake up in the morning, hold my hands and pray for rain.
> I got a head full of ideas that are driving me insane—
> It's a shame the way she makes me scrub the floor.

In this framework, the enslaved 'party', the expressive- and becoming-reactive (see Deleuze 1983), engenders a hatred for his or her spouse as a matter of confusion: the "enslaved" is simply unable to get be-

yond consciousness of difference. In other words, the cynicism (which in Burgoon's essay happens to be expressed as misogyny) that pours forth from the mouths of marriage's victims is consciousness of difference—in this case, between 'is' and 'ought', between 'what I am' and 'how I feel'—overwhelming the capacity for irony and the impulse of laughter, overwhelming the capacity to affirm: "to affirm becoming and the being of becoming" (Deleuze 1983, p. 194). It is desire overwhelming will. It is the disturbing noise of pure complaint. It is what madmen are thought (by those of us who persist in the belief that we are not without reason) to be enacting: misandry, misogyny, misogamy, misanthropy.

Perhaps what is most clearly demonstrated in this revealed archive of discourse is an overwhelming, enveloping, preoccupation with status—an enveloping preoccupation with the *name* of discourse. It is the body, embarrassed, humbled, like Dulcinea, crying out: why must I be called by this name?—and what have I done to deserve the sentence it implies? Burgoon, in this sense, can be taken as a late-modern avatar of the Enlightenment impulse to see time as an ordered series; to see history as the lyrical adaptation of 'man,' as an anthropological entity, to 'his' systems of life, labor, and language. In this impulse, history has the power to communicate a coherent lesson regarding the performance of persons in their relationship to Mankind, organizing both our understandings and our doubts. Against a given destiny (nobility, prodigy, evolution) and its surrounding systems, the telling of history is, at once, the attribution of the Name—and the establishment of the Limit. As Foucault (1970, p. 117) writes:

> One might say that it is the Name that organizes all Classical discourse; to speak or to write is not to say things or express oneself, it is not a matter of playing with language, it is to make one's way toward the sovereign act of nomination, to move through language, towards the place where things and words are conjoined in their common essence, and which makes it possible to give them a name. But once that name has been spoken, all the language which has led up to it, or that has been crossed in order to reach it, is reabsorbed into it and disappears. So that Classical discourse in its profound essence, tends always towards this boundary; but in surviving it, pushes the boundary further away. It continues on its way in the perpetually maintained suspension of the Name.

From this perspective, it should hopefully be clear that the disturbing quality of Burgoon's writing, writing which constitutes his feelings and reflections about his professional situation and his Name, does not surface from a rationality which he, alone, invented. It is, simply, not *his* discourse. It is the discourse of a 'bygone' age. Burgoon, a scholar whose research is informed by the (modern) discipline of psychol-

ogy and, hence, the dialectics and language of modernity, is speaking in this case beyond the limit of modernity. His thinking, given its obsession with names, status, and order, seems very much caught up in the rationality of the Classical episteme. But, again, this is not his 'mistake,' nor is it even fair to insist that a mistake has been made. For, speech communication *itself* is not *clearly* a modern discipline. Its factual beginnings, it is generally conceded,[1] fall somewhere between the end of the Eighteenth Century and the early part of the Nineteenth Century—roughly corresponding with the rupture of classical discourse and the birth of modernity (Foucault 1970; see White 1978, pp. 230-260). Although it is quite true that the field quickly adapted itself to the emerging Nineteenth Century *Geisteswissenschaft* dialectics of *verstehen*, humanism, and criticism situated in the disciplines of psychology, sociology, and literature, it remained committed to a normalizing, classical pedagogy well into the Twentieth Century (see Macke, 1991). In a certain sense, it may well be said that the teaching and writing constitutive of speech communication is, at this very moment, completely sprawled across intellectual history.

Moreover, at each point in speech communication's 'passage' from elocutionary pedagogy into a modern social science research discipline, a Classical preoccupation with nomenclature, order, and power has entered into the public discussion surrounding it.[2] What is, in fact, a crisis (properly understood as a juncture; an interstice) in theory and methodology is taken as an *identity crisis*—an auto-erotic 'instinct' stimulated by a sudden arousal of consciousness: something is different/what is happening (to me)? In this narcissistic pursuit of meaning revealed, it seems, 'only' in the name, consciousness (as ego) seeks its identity in its imminence, in reflections on its circumstances—on what must happen next. Panicked, it takes its immediate and familiar surroundings as its existence—its 'state'— and it, thus, grasps its being as

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[1] I am referring to the reemergence of the speech field as an elocutionary discipline of speaking, not the so-called "origins" of rhetoric found in the works of the ancients. For an excellent collection of background studies in the the development of the speech discipline in the United States, see Wallace (1954).

[2] Each organizational name change that has occurred since the turn of the Twentieth Century—as well as with the establishment of rival organizations, such as the International Communication Association—has been accompanied by a considerable amount of public discussion at professional conventions. The Speech Communication Association's monthly newsletter, *Spectra*, has, over the years, published a fairly representative sampling of this sort of commentary. The changes from the National Association of Teachers of Speech to the Speech Association of America (1950), to the Speech Communication Association (1970), and then to the failed attempt to become the American Communication Association (1989) have, in particular, commanded a considerable amount of attention in *Spectra*. (Also, debates about the name and purpose of the organization were a regular feature of the early issues of the *Quarterly Journal of Public Speaking.)*

both a 'being-object' (in other words, a subject of its state, i.e., the function of conscience), and a 'being-unity' (a subject of its name, or, more specifically, a subject of its unified, organized, individual personality, i.e., the function of ego-ideal). In its obsession with its 'calling' (namely, how and what it is called), speech communication—as with any narcissist—is seeking refuge in the authority vested in its tradition: its origins, lineage, estate, and institutions.

An important consequence of having noted the discursive ambiguities present in speech communication's epistemic transformations is that it is, now, quite evident that speech communication is not merely undergoing a period of "self-consciousness." More to the point, in identifying the 'speech,' the public comportment, of speech communication as an academic entity with the phenomena of *inhibition and apprehension, embarrassment and anxiety, desire and authority,* and *anorexia and misanthropy*, we can observe that a neurotic obsession with power within the academic institution incites a serious, complex, and disturbing discourse.

We are, at this point, well beyond the concept of power insinuated within the (Marxist) dialectic of master and slave, possibly approaching the abduction expressed in Nietzsche's[1] critical sense of the dialectic (where the rule of nobility, we discover, can nowhere be said to *exist*) . We can find in the enslaved's reactive paralogism "You are evil; I am the opposite of what you are; therefore I am good" certain key aspects of speech communication's current 'psychology' of *ressentiment.* But we also see that speech communication's particular embrace of power exceeds this domain of logic. It is as well an Oedipal matter: we are confronting a neurotic individual whose self-loathing is a function of 'parental' guilt. Speech communication's hostility toward its gesture into otherness and difference, a course charted by the presence of the flesh, its asylum in the hierarchy of rational institutions, is a "conscientious but self-repressive obedience to the father" (Abramson 1984, p. 41). Identifying the role of 'Oedipus' to a psychology of domination, Freud observes (1958, p. 337):

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[1]According to Deleuze (1983), Nietzsche's tropic reversal of the poles of the dialectic occurs throughout a number of his significant works (too numerous to mention here). However, Deleuze does indicate that the Nietzsche's most direct statements regarding the 'power' of anti-dialectical affirmation appear in *Thus Spake Zarathustra* and *On the Genealogy of Morals.* For a concise summary of Deleuze's analytical discussion, see Descombes (1980, pp. 152-180).

> the human individual has to devote himself to the great task of detaching himself from his parents.... By neurotics, however, no [detachment] at all is arrived at: the son remains all his life bowed beneath his father's authority.... the same fate can await the daughter. In this sense the Oedipus complex may justly be regarded as the nucleus of the neuroses.

In his analysis of the case of Schreber (the famous paranoiac), Freud notes (1958, p. 54): "The sun, therefore, is nothing but another sublimated symbol for the father.... Its counterpart in this picture of the two parents is 'Mother Earth' as she is generally called." On this basis, it can be said that a rejection of the (sun)light of reason—of fatherly authority—is, at once, a submission to the gravitational forces of the flesh: voluptuousness, excess, that which is always subject to the law of castration. Thus, reason is heaven; the flesh is hell. Within the flesh is the origin of sinful pleasure, of emotion, of waste and impurity, of true decadence. We can readily observe, in this obsessive portrait of reason and civilization, the ancient connections of hysteria to the flesh (especially in its most voluptuous forms); as well, we can begin to detect the emergence of discipline as a practice of denial and abstinence, of aggression and cruelty—as *corporal* punishment. As such, neuroses, paranoia, fascism, or as Foucault has put it (1972, p. 12), "a particular repugnance to thinking of difference," all have their roots in the structure of Oedipus, in the tendency of discourse toward the moral order of the family, the economy of the familiar, and the preeminence of the Name. Following Deleuze and Guattari (1977), we see that the neurotic adopts the style of the conformist, becoming the *normal 'man'* and undergoing a self- imposed renunciation—incapable of approaching (much less transgressing) "the limit of his potential" (Descombes 1980, p. 177).

In this context, we can begin to see the grid tracing and compelling the discursive stream isomorphic with Burgoon's misogynist and misanthropic characterization of speech (i.e., as "whore" [p. 305] and, correspondingly, as "oral performance" [p. 303]), and his desire to ascend from "second or third class normative status" (p. 305) and "compete head-to-head with more established, and in many cases better, disciplines like philosophy, sociology, psychology, and anthropology" (pp. 307-308). Importantly, it is at this point that, beyond the exorbitance of Burgoon's rhetoric, we can begin to take note of modern disciplinary "progress" as a kind of reactive force. For example, Hart's (1989, p. 2) rather unexorbitant observation that "disciplinarily... we can now become part of the larger academic discourse," reveals, essentially, the same Oedipal model and neurotic function.

And, finally, we can see this thematic fully explicated in Lanigan's (1988) study of "conventional" ideology as a recurrent structure reflected in speech communication's practice of holding professional conventions as a preferred forum for the exchange of scholarly thought. As Descutner and Letteri (1990, p. 14) observe, "Lanigan's phenomenological interpretation suggests that 'conventionalism' serves the ideological ends of insuring participation, conformity to past practices and situations, and regularity in behavior. He observes that conventions depend on a specious kind of neutrality in which critique and justification are slighted in favor of commentary and idolatry of famous scholars."

This phenomenon, as Foucault (1977, p. 30) has indirectly suggested, occurs on the foam of discourse, the visible limit—in other words, the *present time*—of our thought and expression. It is taken, in our time, as the understanding of just how far thought may go because it represents, albeit in a vanishing trace, just how far thought has gone, "showing," as Foucault remarks (p. 30), "just how far speech may advance upon the sands of silence." And, it represents, as Lanigan argues (p. 258), the boundary separating criticism from commentary:

> In the process I am describing there is a *legitimation crisis*. A symbolic relationship is created whereby *criticism* is transformed into *commentary*.... Commentary is the unreflective process of *testing* the *regulation* of members of a population when they are agents in a recurrent situation (the Lewis model). Here commentary is the unreflected process of evaluation—literally to fix or determine the value of the speech communication within the boundaries of the technical language and action of the discipline. By comparison, *criticism* is the reflective process of *analyzing* the *constitution* of behavior of the members of a population when they are agents in the recurrent situation...

We see in this depiction of neurotic conventionalism not a field of possibilities, not a dispersion of statements and strategies, but a disappearing and reappearing line of froth. It is a field that exists in the already-disappearing moments of its presence. In Foucault's metaphor, the washing of the sea along the rocks and sand of the shoreline represents the encounter of speech with silence. But the metaphor cannot properly be taken as the conjunction of two alien forces. The two are, in actuality, companion forces, nested together in the centripetal pull of the Earth. Together, their work defines the present: the slap of the wave upon the shore, a sound, a rush, a momentary and visible line of insubstantial moisture and flow—precisely the place where we take pleasure in wading, waiting, where the sand is still visible, and

where we rarely encounter the creatures which define the horror of the sea—and then the pull back into darkness.

The delirium that the present, our presence, is of real and lasting substance because we have deemed it so: this, Foucault tells us (1988, pp. 86-89) is the ultimate tragedy of modernist thinking—precisely because it was the signature of thought in the eighteenth century, the Classical Age. Foucault writes (p. 89): "It would no doubt be one of the interesting axes for a study of the eighteenth century . . . to consider the following fact: the *Aufklärung* [Enlightenment] calls itself *Aufklärung*." In this (so to speak) "Kantian" formulation, the present, which of course is nothing more than a passage, is given the quality of status, of a certain "progress and progressing" which privileges certain aspects of present-day speech. In a sense, it symbolizes the birth of the modern notion of 'communication', that is, in the sense of communicative speech—namely, some speech is communicative (effective, productive) and some is not. And it is this modern notion of communication that perpetuates the tyrannical force of commentary. Identifying a meaning for itself in the discourse of its delirious presence, assuming the 'nobility' of Nietzsche's Aryan Master, certain academic fields, of which speech communication is most certainly one, hierarchically evaluate the participation and behavior of its members. The following passage from Foucault (1972, p. 216) offers a lucid description of the manner in which commentary reactively functions in the communicative speech of conventionalism: "Institutions reply. . . . 'we're here to show you discourse is within the established order of things, that we've waited a long time for its arrival, that a place has been set aside for it—a place which both honours and disarms it; and if it should happen to have a certain power, then it is we and we alone, who give it that power.'"

The Carceral Life of the Body of Eloquence: The Obituary of Dame Speech

It is at this point that we can begin to see signs of yet another rupture, imperceptible before, in the (modern) discourse of *ressentiment* as expressed in Burgoon's writing. This rupture concerns, directly, the partnership of speech with communication. It is indeed a complex matter. The group of academicians who align themselves with Burgoon's general position (although perhaps not with all of the lines and corners of his aggressive rhetoric) constitutes more than a mere plurality. It would be a fair assessment

that most of the field's members have come to associate 'speech' with the agenda of the "older tradition"[1] (in other words, performance, skills, public address), and 'communication' with the "newer tradition" (social science, criticism, theory). In this sense, speech is the parent of communication. But speech is also commonly identified as the spouse (wife), the wedded partner of communication! Vile, dreaded incest! The perverted alliance! The corporate body known as speech communication emerges as Oedipus incarnate, and its self-hatred and self-mutilation has been prefigured since Sophocles!

Yet, as an accident of language, this is perhaps not a serious point: while we may find truth in the histrionic discourse spoken by a raving 'madman' we will distract ourselves if we allow all of that which foams at his mouth to be taken as terminal. What is to be taken seriously, however, is the role of speech in the collective nightmare of modern communication scholars. The "alliance gone bad" (see Foucault 1978, p. 110) is the image, the "figure", that is given in support of an organizational move to displace (and further disarm) the agenda of speech. The academic and scientific body of communication scientists, teachers, and scholars, views itself as party to a dysfunctional relationship and "an abnormal sexuality." As Foucault (p. 110) writes, "These . . . figures of an alliance gone bad and an abnormal sexuality . . . were the means by which the disturbing factors of the latter were brought into the former; and yet they also provided an opportunity for the alliance system to assert its prerogatives in the order of sexuality."

It is important to note that this is not simply a reiteration of ideas which I have previously addressed in this study. "Speech" is a *figure*. It exists eidetically (in the rhetoric of discourse), not empirically (in the facticity and flesh of experience). "Speech," thus, is not a wife or mother any more than "communication" exists as a husband. These are simple points, but they are not trivial points. The army of scientists, teachers, and scholars who have come to organize their metalanguage (signifying a set of discursive practices) within the category of "communication" have simply made the common mistake of confusing the name with the thing named. Thus, what they have come to despise is not the 'thingness' of speech, but the

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[1]Descutner and Letteri (pp. 7-8), for example, employ this particular opposition in their own writing, and it would also be fair to say that Descutner and Letteri represent a theoretical and methodological position within the field starkly contrastive with that of Burgoon.

metalanguage (and discursive praxis) that falls within the category of "speech" with which they have been allied in the classificatory scheme of the academic world.

Which raises an interesting point: as a named, ordered discursive praxis, what threat does "speech" pose for the discursive praxis of communication? What is so perilous in the fact that there is a metalanguage named "speech"? Burgoon and his ideological allies correctly identify the presence of a curriculum of pedagogy in the techniques of effective communicative speech (formerly called "elocution") with the absence of communicative inquiry. But the delirium which fuels this ideology is that this armed, perilous aspect of speech ever really existed in the algebra of history which formed the academic unit signifying the discipline of speech communication. Although 'speech' in the expression 'speech communication' functions as an adjective noun modifying 'communication,' it was not speech which, historically speaking, transformed communication.[1] Nor can it properly be said that the contemporary discursive praxis of speech is being transformed by communication. Instead, speech was always-already transformed—or, rather, colonized—by communication. Actually, speech, as a human doctrine, as a developed study of the performance and signification of the body's meaningful inclination and placement (through voice and gesture) in a world of others, identity, and difference,[2] cannot be said to have existed as a pedagogy anywhere in the working vocabulary of communication.[3]

Moreover, a concept of speech, i.e., as a body speaking, as *parole*, cannot even be said to have existed in the eighteenth and nineteenth century doctrines of elocution and belle lettres. Elocutionary instruction has been commonly identified as the origin of speech education in North America (see

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[1]Elsewhere, I have closely examined some of the taken for granted assumptions imbedded within the typical renderings of speech communication's history (see Macke 1991).

[2]Speech is understood in this context as *parole*, particularly that concept of *parole* explicated by Merleau- Ponty (1962). See also Lanigan (1972, 1988) and Gusdorf (1965).

[3]It is worth noting that "speech" also was not clearly articulated as a concept within the doctrine of semiology during its development by Saussure and his early followers in Europe. As Greimas and Courtés (1982, p. 307) point out: "In the Saussurean dichotomy speech is opposed to natural language without its being a well defined concept for all that. Indeed, as this dichotomy was posited and developed by F. de Saussure only in order better to circumscribe the notion of natural language (for him the sole object of linguistics) speech appeared from its origin as a kind of catchall notion. . . . The underlying set of problems split up subsequently into a series of conceptualizations, variable from one theory to another, so that today the concept of speech has ceased to be operational."

Woolbert 1923; Wallace 1954), and within representative examples of this instruction, notably Rev. Gilbert Austin's *Chironomia* (1959), we are able to locate an explicit articulation of a model of speech training that many members of the speech communication discipline have, customarily, held to be the discipline's primary historical embarrassment. In elocutionary doctrine, the concept of speech was *adaptive*: elocutionists sought to transform a student's native habits of performance into those typical of persons having attained advanced social status (see Robb and Thonssen 1959). As such, elocutionary doctrine was essentially a function of power and desire. Class distinctions were, thus, employed within this doctrine to distinguish working class from bourgeois manners of discourse, and individuals sought to promote their identity within the social structure by gaining mastery over their "savage instincts."

On this very basis it can be asserted that in the deployment of class consciousness and nobility as a rule of discourse, we can locate the birth of a doctrine of communicative speech. Although preoccupied with the concept of performance as technique, the elocutionary movement was nonetheless concerned with what it took to be effective speech; as a liberal doctrine it sought to simultaneously expand and elevate the realm of the "common" within the community of triumphant cultural archetypes. It not only attempted to isolate a uniformity of noble eloquence, it sought its dispersal. In short, the elocutionary doctrine of communicative speech clearly exemplifies what Foucault has termed the "normalization of discourse" (see Macke1991; Dreyfus and Rabinow 1982).

The *Geisteswissenschaft* discipline of speech that surfaced at the beginning of the twentieth century, later to proclaim itself communication science, did not emerge in opposition to the general and unarticulated doctrine of normalized speech that was advanced during the elocutionary period. Rather, whatever opposition did obtain was premised on the elocutionists' weak position as an academic entity, and the absence of scholarly and scientific foundation for what they taught. Charles Woolbert (1923, p. 9) writes:

> Contributing to this preoccupation with German standards was the suicidal extravagance of the old-line elocutionists, assuming to have a scientific basis for their doctrines, but not willing to pay the price for scholastic thoroughness; giving themselves vastly more to art than to science, and at a time when art was on the defensive and science arrogant and all but despotic.

What is evident in this passage is that Woolbert, a scientist who was also one of the discipline's early scholars, is expressing his dissatisfaction toward the quality of scholarship in support of elocutionary doctrine, but not explicitly toward the doctrine itself.

Not long after its establishment as an independent unit of academic discourse, members of this new and growing field were becoming almost uniformly convinced of the importance of adherence to the emerging rules of discursive formation. The discipline's ranks began to witness an expansion of interest in research on persuasion (i.e., effective speech) following the positivistic, behavioral methods of social science, particularly in terms of this scholarship's seeming ubiquity in the pages of "speech" journals. By the middle of the century, the *Geisteswissenschaft* discipline of speech pedagogy had practically disappeared into the discursive praxis of communication science. As Sproule (1987, p. 75) maintains:

> . . . communication scientists benefitted from ideological trends that helped make their paradigm the dominant perspective for social scientists interested in modern persuasion. Driven by an ideology of science and service that fit the post World War II preference for objective, apolitical knowledge about society, the new paradigm widened its influence by infiltrating other disciplines in the 1950s and 1960s.

As the story generally goes, it was at this point that the old-line agenda of "speech" began to capitulate to the social science agenda of communication research. However, it simply cannot be stated that "speech" ever maintained a position of privilege and autonomy independent of its disciplinary subjugation as "effective, communicative, persuasive speech." The old-line agenda of speech was always borne along as a necessary function of the ordered discourse of communication.

So, it very much appears to be the case that Dame Speech, who, we have been repeatedly told, possesses a proud lineage dating back to Aristotle and who elected to tarnish her family crest during the nineteenth century, never actually maintained a position of privilege with respect to communication. What is perhaps the greatest irony is that the study of speech, even in its nonscientific, performance-oriented pedagogy, is not and never has been a "distinct academic discipline." In fact, the "speech" which communication scientists have come to despise is nothing more than the pedagogical praxis of communication science in its manifestation as an ethical rhetoric (namely, the persuasive and effective forms of "how to" and "ought to" wherein winning strategies dictate contexts of choice). The life history of Dame

Speech was finished as soon as it began: no such person has ever existed (or, perhaps a more accurate assessment is that the character named Dame Speech is merely communication science in drag.) "Her" story is a story about the limits of communicative speech, about the limits of speech, it is not *about* speech; "she" has never been recognized by her name.

In short, speech is not a historical appendage of communication any more than communication is a historical appendage of speech. The two simply are not "bonded" entities. Instead, one is merely the performative, tropological extension of the other. Burgoon posits, initially, the *metaphor* of an "alliance" (whole) involving two dissimilar partners (substance), but it is an alliance (whole) which which has "gone bad" (attribute)—the metaphor swerves into *metonymy*.[1] What is revealed, however, is that speech exists merely as an entity contained within communication. The relationship between speech and communication as American (U.S.A.) academic entities thus is operationally one of synechdoche (part/whole), yet it is ironically projected onto the (decoded) discourse of normal social science as a seeming contradiction, each entity continuously problematizing the other.

The activity of speech as *parole*, however, takes place only in the residuum of communication's consciousness; it resides only in the wake, in the umbra of communication's performance in the service of anthropological matters. If social science is in fact afraid of human speech, afraid of an endless number of speaking bodies suddenly cast in their own light, it is afraid of its own shadow.

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[1]This analysis follows the tropological method suggested by Lanigan (1989) and White (1980).

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